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SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

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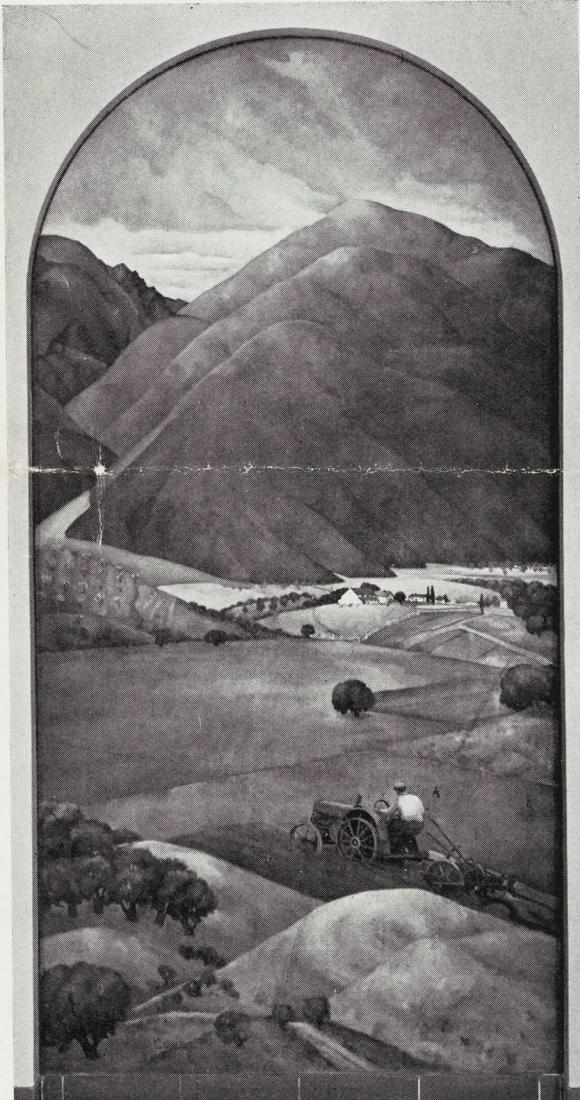
VOL. 1

JULY, 1934

No. 3

MURAL SUPERSTITIONS

By NELSON POOLE



MURAL (OIL ON CANVAS)

In Elevator Foyer, Coit Memorial, San Francisco

By RINALDO CUNEO

The revival of a primitive mural method has brought forth great claims for its superiority, even extravagant and absurd claims.

Most often repeated is the assertion that somehow a Fresco painted directly on the wall is bound to be good Mural painting, and this in spite of the evidence of our own eyes. Not only have a great many of the Frescos painted in San Francisco been bad decoration, violating in form and color the integrity of the wall, but badly designed as to their architectural relation thereto. These might just as well have been painted in the Artist's studio as the only relation they seem to have to their setting is the measurement of the space they occupy.

This criticism will undoubtedly seem drastic to some artists, but there would seem to be a need of some plain speaking because of the assumption that all other mediums but Fresco

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PAINTING MORE THAN MEDIA

By RINALDO CUNEO

Reading the articles on Fresco by Arnautoff and Boynton, I readily realized that they are sincere and enthusiastic about this medium. They know what they are talking about when they stick to technique and the action of plaster and color, etc. We all know that it is a fine medium and it is a glorious thrill to behold the masterpieces by Massacio, Giotto and Angelo. I grant all this. Cannot the same be said of the great Venetians who painted their marvelous murals on canvas and wood? It would be silly to say that their work is dull and lacking life.

I have seen beautiful examples in both media and I respect them all.

Diego Rivera said somewhere that painting

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CONCERNING THE FRENCH SHOW

By WILLIAM HESTHAL



LANDSCAPE WITH REPOSING HUNTSMEN, by Claude Lorrain.

A pictorial art that is a voice of a culture profoundly and deeply rooted into the soil and scene of France, cannot, we feel, be adequately reviewed in such an article as this is to be. Therefore, in preface, we meekly belie pretensions to such capabilities, not only because of required brevity, but also, and mostly, as we realize our lack of necessary background. Therefore let it be understood that what follows has not the validity of authority, but is the voice of a personal approach.

Such a deal of boncombe has been said and written, and so many supposedly revolutionary credos advanced for and against *Modern Painting* that in the resulting muddle sight has been lost of the fact that it is not the theories but the painting that time will judge as art.

In viewing French painting as a unit, then, what impressed us most was a sense of natural growth. It seemed, no matter how antithetical the theories behind the paintings, (and these were often violently opposed), that French Art advanced in a logical progression, that a common denominator related the whole.

From the painting of the *School of Avignon*, through to those of the *Twentieth Century School of Paris*, changes in plastic approach are subtle. Classicist or Romanticist, Impressionist, Post-Impressionist or Cubist—all spring from French soil.

In lucidity and *la raison* (both qualities truly descriptive of Gallic culture) lies the strength and weakness of French painting; strength in that there is very little painting down-right bad—weakness, in that there is very little that is moving. Painters that think and feel in paint—how richly, perhaps too richly, is French Art encrusted with them! Clouet, Largilliere, Lorrain, Watteau, Chardin, Ingres, Manet, Renoir, Matisse, Derain, all master painters, painters of sometimes miraculous powers, but always painters who paint with only paint. Where, then, are the giants, the Rembrandts who paint with human blood, the El Grecos who paint with fire, the Michael Angelos who paint with the hand of God? We seek them. Delacroix, Cezanne, Van Gogh approach, approach valiantly, gloriously—but then retire.

Of all schools the French has taught most

to the modern painter. It is a school where *painter's painters* abound, where pictic problems are formulated, and logically, often dazzlingly, concluded. American painting, as the rest of the world's, has been influenced. Much has been learned,—but alas, also too much imitated.

It is interesting to note, with all the talk of painting the American scene going on about us, how true French painting is to its own scene—and withal that, how irrelevant to the important issue of *is it art* the scene-angle becomes. In this, it seems to us, French scene or American scene, steam-shovels or Eiffel Towers, all are indifferent elements. What makes the Art is not the scene, bright color or dull, hue or form, but the painter who happens to be an Artist. A strange creature, this artist, for his work is unpredictable.

We have always considered it a useless procedure to write about paintings—either a picture speaks for itself or there is no excuse for its existence. This show has already spoken.

In closing, we tender our appreciation to Dr. Heil. No mention of the magnificent exhibition of French Painting at the Legion of Honor Palace would be complete without it.

MURAL SUPERSTITIONS

(Continued from Page 1) bear the onus of the very faults here pointed out.

Good Mural painting has to rely on other factors than the technical procedure alone and its qualities as efficient mural decoration are evident or absent in whatever medium the painting is executed. In fact one might be justified in stating that this belief in the absolute Mural qualities of Fresco painting has led the Artist to neglect the very things which would make a Mural painting good.

PAINTING MORE THAN MEDIA (Continued From Page One)

on canvas is passe because sailing ships were no more—Was he thinking of these same Venetians? I am sure he admired them.

Buildings made of glass are due in this progressive age. Shall we be compelled to discard both Fresco and Oils? Why quibble? Let us concentrate more with honest and intelligent work and try to express our times, and maybe, we shall create architecture and decoration on the order of the Egyptians where the outside and inside were lovely and in harmony.



GIRL WITH HOOP, by Renoir

BY THEIR ACTS WE SHALL KNOW OUR FRIENDS

By LUCIEN LABAUDT

There is nothing new about the wholesale rejection of the San Francisco artists by the jury of the Los Angeles Art Association. The same degree of discontent in art circles is caused by any jury system (San Francisco Art Association included). But what is really important is the precedent created by the five Los Angeles artists, whose names should be known to all San Francisco Art Association members, who stood up solidly for a San Francisco artist, whose work once accepted by the jury, was combed out by a moralist. These artists demanded that their paintings be removed unless the contested painting was hung—they stood their ground and won—the rejected nude was hung.

This lesson on concerted action MUST be remembered, in unity there is strength. The five artists are: Warren Newcomb, Stanley Reckless, Paul Sample, Millard Sheets and MacDonald Wright.

The wonderful support given by Mr. Arthur Millier in the Los Angeles Times must also be acknowledged. Let us hope that out of this controversy something constructive will result.

ALL-CALIFORNIA SHOW HAS \$1400 IN AWARDS

The Los Angeles Art Association Jury of Awards selected the following paintings among the 92 in the first All-California Art Exhibit held recently at the Biltmore Salon:

The First Prize of \$1000 was awarded to William Ritschel, Carmel, for *Sunlit Shores of California*.

The Second Prize of \$300 went to *Magnolias*, by DeWitt Parshall, N. A., Santa Barbara.

The \$100 award went to Thomas Craig, Los Angeles, for *Santa Ana Canyon*.

The 1934 Merit awards for paintings were awarded to the following canvases: *Still Life No. 999*, by William A. Gaw, Berkeley; *The Spring*, by Count de Kervily, Santa Barbara; *Admiral Reeves*, by J. Mason Reeves, Los Angeles; *The Family*, by G. D. Richmond, La Canada; and *Afternoon in the Arroyo*, by F. Tolles Chamberlin.

Honorable Mentions were received by S. MacDonald Wright, Santa Monica; Maynard Dixon, San Francisco; Frank Tenney Johnson, Alhambra; Conrad Buff and Nicolai Fechin, Los Angeles; Elliott Vaughn, Los Angeles; Charles Reiffel, San Diego; Phil Dike, Los Angeles; Lee Blair, Glendale; Moya Del Pino, San Francisco.



THE BRIDGE AT JOINVILLE, by Segonzac

CALENDAR OF EXHIBITIONS FOR MONTH OF JULY

Adams-Danysh Gallery, 166 Geary Street: Exhibition of Water Colors by Bernard Zakheim; two sketches by Whistler, exhibited for the first time; Woodcuts by Joseph Raphael.

Art Center, 730 Montgomery Street: closed during July.

California School of Fine Arts: Students' Exhibition. July 12th for three weeks, Photographs of Persian-Islamic Architecture, prepared by Arthur Upham Pope.

California Palace of the Legion of Honor, Lincoln Park: French show through July 8th, a show of French paintings from the Fifteenth Century to the present time. The Louvre has loaned eleven paintings for this exhibition, which will not be shown anywhere in the United States but San Francisco; continuation of the Exhibition of Creative Art by Children.

Courvoisier Gallery: Exhibition of modern French paintings by Renoir, Monet, Degas, Pissaro, Forain, Cezanne, Picasso, Derain and Redon.

DeYoung Museum: Continuing through July Exhibition of Etchings by Levon West and other contemporary American and British prints from the collection of M. S. Achenbach; Exhibition of Creative Art by Children.

At the last meeting of the Board of Directors of the San Francisco Art Association, Mr. W. W. Crocker was appointed Chairman of the Board of Governors of the War Memorial Museum. Mr. John Francis Neylan was appointed Director.

Mr. Frede Vidar, member of the San Francisco Art Association and correspondent for a Copenhagen paper, writes the following in a letter to a San Francisco friend, in discussing the Los Angeles All-California Show: "There is no reason whatsoever why the San Francisco Artists should feel badly about being rejected. Some of the better painters of the South have also been rejected. . . . It is to be hoped that the San Francisco Artists will not be planning reprisals on their Southern confreres. I have talked to a number of the Artists here and they regret the affair as much as we do."

There will be a reception and pre-view to members and friends of the San Francisco Art Association, Thursday Evening, July 12, at 8 o'clock, in honor of the Exhibition of Photographs of Persian-Islamic Architecture.

East-West Gallery: June 25th to July 14th, Exhibition of Water Colors and Paints by Kandinsky and Klee; July 16th to August 4th, Lithographs by Diego Rivera, Orosco, Siqueiros, Charlot and Merida.

Paul Elder Gallery: Exhibition of Water Colors by V. R. Anderson.

Belber Lilienthal Gallery: July 2nd to July 14th, Exhibition of Water Colors by Norman Roswell.

Gump's Gallery: July 2nd to July 14th, Etchings of New York, Japan and San Francisco, by Anton Schutz of New York; July 14th to July 28th, Etchings by contemporary English artists.

Mills College Gallery: Sculpture, Drawings and Paintings, by Alexander Archipenko.

Oakland Art Gallery: Exhibition of Water Colors, by William R. Cameron.

Roy Vernon Sowers: Exhibition of Etchings, by Piranesi (1720-1778); Exhibition of Engravings, by early masters.

The California State Fair will hold its Annual Exhibition of Paintings by California Artists September 1st to September 10th. Pictures must be in Sacramento by August 24th. For further information get in touch with Gump's, 246 Post Street, San Francisco.

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